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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/697,674	10/29/2003	Philip F. Lanzafame	1211-4-3	8402
996	7590	02/28/2005	EXAMINER	
GRAYBEAL, JACKSON, HALEY LLP 155 - 108TH AVENUE NE SUITE 350 BELLEVUE, WA 98004-5901			THOMPSON, HUGH B	
			ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
			3634	

DATE MAILED: 02/28/2005

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.	Applicant(s)	
10/697,674	LANZAFAME, PHILIP F.	
Examiner	Art Unit	
Hugh B. Thompson II	3634	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on 29 October 2003.
- 2a) This action is FINAL. 2b) This action is non-final.
- 3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) Claim(s) 1-39 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) Claim(s) 1-39 is/are rejected.
- 7) Claim(s) 7,12,13,18,23,24,29,34,35 and 39 is/are objected to.
- 8) Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) All b) Some * c) None of:
1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date 5-18-04, 7-15-04.
- 4) Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____.
- 5) Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) Other: _____.

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

Claims 1-39 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

With respect to claim 1, the applicant has recited an attachment base in sub-paragraphs "a" and "b". It is unclear as to the number of attachment bases required.

With respect to claim 2, it is unclear as to where the locking pin is inserted.

With respect to claim 3, sub-paragraph "b", it is unclear as to the number of attachment structures required.

With respect to claim 5, lines 2-3, it is unclear as to how the leveler "defines six directions of up and down". It appears that the applicant is defining six vertically displaced positions. There appears to be only one up direction and only one down direction. Further, the phrases "up/down" and "in/out" are improper and should be removed. Claims 16 and 27 recite a similar ambiguity.

With respect to claim 11, it is unclear as to the number of "leveler mating surfaces" required.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

Claims 1-6, 8-11, 14, 15, 27, 28, 30-33, and 36-38 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by King #5,704,451. King discloses a ladder leveler assembly, as best seen in Figures 5 and 6, comprised of a ladder 12, a ladder leveler (lower portion of Figure 6), a leveler attachment base/plate 20, a leveler attachment structure/movable latch/locking device/mating structure 64, a locking pin 72, which is received within a slot/attachment surface (unnumbered), catchment surfaces 36 that allow the leveler to be placed in at least 6 vertically displaced positions, and safety locks/pins/bolts 22.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claims 16, 17, 19-22, 25, and 26 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over King as advanced above. King fails to disclose particular dimensions of the attachment base. The dimensioning of the attachment base is an obvious design choice, not

expected to produce any new and unexpected results. Therefore, to one of ordinary skill in the art, it would have been obvious, as a matter of design choice, to dimension the leveler of King, i.e., a ratio of the width to height of the leveler being 1 to 8, in the manner as claimed while producing no new and unexpected results.

Allowable Subject Matter

Claims 7, 12, 13, 18, 23, 24, 29, 34, 35, and 39 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. The primary reason for the allowable subject matter of claims 7, 18, and 29 is the inclusion of a horizontally displaced direction, i.e., left or right. For claims 12, 23, and 34, it is the inclusion of the leveler attachment surface including at least one protrusion that receives the leveler attachment structure. For claim 39, it is the inclusion of a slot located in a plate that is a part of the ladder rail. The prior art of record fails to teach or suggest the claimed feature absent the applicant's own disclosure.

Conclusion

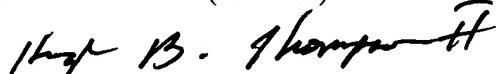
The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure. Dean #6,595,326 and Eaton #6,702,066 are cited to teach ladder leveler devices.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Hugh B. Thompson II whose telephone number is (703) 305-0102. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday thru Friday 9 am to 5:30pm.

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If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Peter Cuomo can be reached on (703) 308-0827. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).



Hugh B. Thompson II
Primary Examiner
Art Unit 3634

February 17, 2005